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# ANTI-SEMITISM I: THE STRIKING CONSTANCY AND UNIQUENESS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

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Throughout world history, the Jewish people have endured severe ongoing hate, persecution, exile, violence and genocide. Although in recent decades American Jews have not experienced much anti-Semitism, their French and even British counterparts are now seriously questioning their future in Europe due to the increase in anti-Semitic acts there. Israel is subject to ongoing threats from Iran, Syria, and Arab terrorist organizations, and Israel's relationship with Egypt and Jordan could be described as "fragile peace" at best, not to mention the Palestinian demographic "time bomb." Anti-Semitism is not a mere platform for satire, as Tom Lehrer expressed in his 1960's folksong entitled National Brotherhood Week:

*Oh, the Protestants hate the Catholics,  
and the Catholics hate the Protestants,  
and the Hindus hate the Muslims  
and everybody hates the Jews.*

Still, why does "everybody" (even if this is an exaggeration) hate the Jews? The incredible hatred for the Jews which has existed in various forms throughout history, as seen in Pagan, Christian, Islamic and secular cultures, demands an explanation. To gain a greater understanding of anti-Semitism, there are three Morasha shiurim addressing this topic. This first class will demonstrate how nations, religious adherents and political groups have perpetrated ongoing oppression, persecution and violence towards the Jewish people since Avraham, the first Jew. It will further show that there is no rational sociological explanation for anti-Semitic behavior. The second class will challenge proposed "popular" theories for anti-Semitism. The third shiur provides a Torah framework to understand this seemingly irrational phenomenon and then concludes by addressing whether anything can be done to eradicate it.

Here are some of the key questions we will address in this class:

- ☞ Who were the first anti-Semites?
- ☞ Why should other religions such as Christianity and Islam bear a grudge towards Judaism?
- ☞ How did anti-Semitism during the Enlightenment differ from its religious predecessors?
- ☞ How is contemporary anti-Zionism really a masked form of anti-Semitism?
- ☞ What distinguishes anti-Semitism from any other form of racial, religious, or national discrimination or hatred?

**CLASS OUTLINE:**

- Introduction: **Why the Jews?**
- Section I: **Paradigms of Anti-Semitism - Biblical Foundations**
- Section II: **Anti-Semitism in the Pagan and Ancient World**
- Section III: **Christian Anti-Semitism**
- Section IV: **Islamic Anti-Semitism**
- Section V: **Enlightenment Anti-Semitism**
- Section VI: **Nazi Anti-Semitism**
- Section VII: **Anti-Zionism: Anti-Semitism is not just History**
- Section VIII: **The Uniqueness of Anti-Semitism**

[Note: Examining anti-Semitism may be painful or upsetting to some people and may raise the question: Why add salt to old and new wounds? Yet, by understanding anti-Semitism, we will gain essential insight into the Jewish people's very purpose in this world.]

## INTRODUCTION: WHY THE JEWS?

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*Hatred of the Jew has been humanity's greatest hatred. While hatred of other groups has always existed, no hatred has been as universal, as deep, or as permanent as antisemitism. How are the universality, depth, and permanence of antisemitism to be explained? Why such hatred and fear of people who never constituted more than a small minority among those who most hated and feared them? Why, nearly always and nearly everywhere, the Jews?*

*Many answers have been offered by scholars. These include, most commonly, economic factors, the need for scapegoats, ethnic hatred, xenophobia, resentment of Jewish affluence and professional success, and religious bigotry. But ultimately these answers do not explain antisemitism: they only explain what factors have exacerbated antisemitism and caused it to erupt in a given circumstance. None accounts for the universality, depth, and persistence of antisemitism. In fact, we have encountered virtually no study of antisemitism that even attempts to offer a universal explanation of Jew-hatred. Nearly every study of antisemitism consists almost solely of historical narrative, claiming implicitly that no universal reason for antisemitism exists.*

*We reject this approach. To ignore the question of ultimate causation, or to deny that there are ultimate causes for antisemitism, contradicts both common sense and history.*

*Antisemitism has existed too long and in too many disparate cultures to ignore the problem of ultimate cause and/or to claim that new or indigenous factors are responsible every time it erupts. Factors specific to a given society help account for the manner or time in which antisemitism erupts, but they do not explain its genesis – why antisemitism at all? To cite but one example, the depressed economy in Germany in the 1920s and 1930s may help to explain why Nazis hated Jews, but not why they wanted to murder every Jew in the world. Economic depressions do not account for gas chambers.*

*The very consistency of the passions Jews have aroused demands a consistent explanation. Ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, medieval and many modern Christians and Muslims, and Nazis and Communists have perhaps only one thing in common: they have all counted the Jews as their enemy, often their greatest enemy. Why?*

*“Why the Jews,” by Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin, 1983, 2003, pp. 17, 21-22.*

This first class will demonstrate how nations, religious adherents and political groups have perpetrated ongoing oppression, persecution and violence towards the Jewish people since Avraham, the first Jew. It will further show that there is no rational sociological explanation for anti-Semitic behavior. The second class will challenge proposed “popular” theories for anti-Semitism. The third shiur provides a Torah framework to understand this seemingly irrational phenomenon and then concludes by addressing whether anything can be done to eradicate it.

To illustrate how this phenomenon is unfortunately still upon us, the following news items reflect ongoing anti-Semitism worldwide, this year alone (2015, when this class was published):

## **Two months, 22 victims: The Human Cost of Terror**

**By Noam Dvir, [ynetnews.com](http://ynetnews.com), November 23, 2015**

In Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, the West Bank, and Be'er Sheva, Israelis as young as 18 and as old as 78 have lost their lives in violent terror attacks. Hadar Buchris, a 21-year-old from Safed, became the 22nd terror victim in the last two months when she was murdered in an attack at Gush Etzion junction on Sunday afternoon. Medical teams have so far treated 192 wounded people, while another 82 have been treated for shock. Days of relative quiet in Israel have alternated with outbursts of Palestinian violence, which has included stabbings, shootings, and vehicular attacks.

## **Swedish Jewish Community Shuts Down as Country Goes on High Alert**

**[www.tabletmag.com](http://www.tabletmag.com), November 19, 2015**

After meeting with police on Wednesday, the leaders of Sweden's Jewish community opted to cancel all evening activities and shutter its synagogues until further notice, Radio Sweden reported. The decision applied to the cities of Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö. Sweden's national terrorism threat level is currently raised to four out of five—the country's highest ever—as authorities hunt for a local terror suspect in the wake of last week's Paris attacks. In recent years, Swedish Jews have been the victims of a slew of anti-Semitic attacks, with some anti-Jewish bigotry even seeping into the elite discourse. A study by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights found that 60 percent of Sweden's 18,000 Jews fear to publicly identify as Jewish.

## **Kansas: Death Sentence Imposed on Man Who Sought to Kill Jews**

**[Nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com) by The Associated Press, Nov. 10, 2015**

A judge on Tuesday followed a jury's recommendation and sentenced an avowed anti-Semite to death, Frazier Miller, for the fatal shootings of three people at Kansas Jewish sites. Mr. Miller said he shot his victims because he wanted to kill Jewish people before he died. Upon the judge's announcement, Mr. Miller yelled, "Heil Hitler," and was removed from the courtroom.

## **Netanyahu: If Iran nuclear deal is good, why hide it from Israel?**

**By Tamar Pileggi, [timesofisrael.com](http://timesofisrael.com) February 16, 2015**

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu warned: "The current [nuclear control] proposal to Iran would endanger Israel. It would enable Iran to break out its first nuclear device within an unacceptably short time. And it would allow Iran to build an industrial capability to enrich uranium that could provide the fuel for many bombs in the coming years. A regime that openly calls for Israel's destruction would thus have finally the means to realize its genocidal aims."

## ***Fear on Rise, Jews in France Weigh an Exit***

**By Dan Bilefsky, [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com), January 12, 2015**

*PARIS — French Jews, already feeling under siege by anti-Semitism, say the trauma of the terrorist attacks last week has left them scared, angry, unsure of their future in France and increasingly willing to consider conflict-torn Israel as a safer refuge. “It is a war here,” said Jacqueline Cohen, owner of an art store on Rue des Rosiers in a Jewish neighborhood lined with falafel and Judaica shops where many businesses were closed Monday morning. “Here we feel vulnerable and exposed. We are afraid to send our children to school.”*

*Residents said their worry intensified after Friday’s terrorist attack, when a heavily armed Frenchman, stormed the kosher Hyper Cacher supermarket in Porte de Vincennes in eastern Paris. Four hostages were killed in that episode. So acute is the sense of insecurity among Jews that Serge Cwajgenbaum, secretary general of the European Jewish Congress, said the four supermarket victims were to be buried in Jerusalem on Tuesday, partly because of fears that their graves would be desecrated in France. Mr. Cwajgenbaum said that the attack at the supermarket was a tipping point for French Jews after a recent spate of anti-Semitic attacks, including the tossing of firebombs and attacks on synagogues and shops in Jewish neighborhoods in Paris that coincided with Israel’s incursion in Gaza last summer. A French-born man was accused of gunning down four people at the Jewish museum in Brussels in May...The French authorities said Monday that thousands of police officers and soldiers would be deployed to protect Jewish schools and other “sensitive sites,” in one of the country’s biggest peacetime security operations.*

## ***The new anti-Semitism: Majority of British Jews feel they have no future in UK, says new study***

**By Cahal Milmo, [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk), Jan 14, 2015**

*More than half of British Jewish people fear Jews have no future in the UK, according to a new study which also reveals that anti-Semitic sentiments are more prevalent than widely believed. British society is at a “tipping point” with Jewish families increasingly questioning whether to stay in the country, campaigners claim today.*

## ***Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions***

**[wikipedia.org/wiki/Boycott,\\_Divestment\\_and\\_Sanctions](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/Boycott,_Divestment_and_Sanctions)**

*The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS Movement) is a global campaign attempting to increase economic and political pressure on Israel to comply with the stated goals of the movement: the end of Israeli occupation and colonization of Palestinian land, full equality for Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel, and respect for the right of return of Palestinian refugees.*

*The campaign was started on 9 July 2005 by 171 Palestinian non-governmental organizations in support of the Palestinian cause for boycott, divestment and international*

*sanctions against Israel. Citing a body of UN resolutions and specifically echoing the anti-apartheid campaigns against white minority rule in apartheid era South Africa, the BDS campaign called for “various forms of boycott against Israel until it meets its obligations under international law.”*

*There is considerable debate about the scope, efficacy, and morality of the BDS movement. Critics argue that the BDS movement is anti-Semitic and promotes the delegitimization of Israel. BDS supporters argue that both the movement (and criticism of the movement) are similar to the earlier boycotts of South Africa during its apartheid era, a comparison that the critics categorically reject on the grounds of dissimilarity [of the Israeli government].*

As Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin state, “No hatred has been as universal, as deep, or as permanent as anti-Semitism” (Why The Jews, p. 3). To refresh our memory, we will take a look at the extraordinary permanence of hatred for the Jews manifesting itself in different guises throughout all eras of history. (Though very relevant, we will not describe the gruesome details that show the insane depths and ferocity of this hatred throughout history.)

## SECTION I. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

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Following is a brief summary of key historical anti-Semitic biblical events and personalities. The root reasons for anti-Semitism actually trace back to the motives and behavior of these biblical anti-Semites and will be explored in the third class of this series.

### **Nimrod – The First Anti-Semite**

Anti-Semitism begins in approximately 1763 BCE in direct response to the belief of Avraham the first Jew that there is one God who created, directs and supervises the universe and gives mankind an ethical framework for living. The ruling King Nimrod, champion of that era’s ubiquitous idol worship, sentences Avraham to death by casting him into a furnace. God intervenes and Avraham miraculously escapes unscathed.

### **Yishmael**

Avraham and his wife, Sarah, are childless, and Sarah requests that Avraham marry her maidservant, Hagar, who subsequently gives birth to Yishmael. Later, God tells Avraham that he and Sarah will have a child, Yitzchak (Isaac), with whom he will forge the Jewish covenant. Yishmael becomes the patriarch of the Yishmaelites, who eventually establish Islam (in the early 7th century), through Mohammad, claiming God has rescinded His covenant with the Jewish people and re-established it with adherents to Islam. Islamic anti-Semitism has been prevalent since its inception.

### **Esav**

Yitzchak marries Rivka (Rebecca), and they bear twins: Yaakov (Jacob) and Esav (Esau). The twins struggle over who deserves to be the heir of the Jewish people. Yaakov purchases from

Esav the rights of the first born child, which the latter despises. When Yitzchak grows old, he asks Esav to prepare to receive blessings, seemingly as heir to leading the Jewish people. Rivka overhears and instructs Yaakov to preempt Esav and to receive the blessings from Yitzchak in a deceptive way, in her belief that Yitzchak does not perceive Esav's true, immoral nature. Yitzchak blesses Yaakov, disguised as Esav, and then Esav enters, unknowing what has transpired. Discovering that Yaakov has received the blessing in his stead, Esav is enraged, as the verse says, "Now Esav harbored hatred toward Yaakov because of the blessing Yitzchak had blessed Yaakov, and Esav said to himself, 'The days of mourning will come soon for my father, and then I will kill my brother Yaakov'" (Bereishit/Genesis 27:41). When Yitzchak realizes what has transpired, he affirms the blessings to Yaakov. Esav sends his son, Elifaz to kill Yaakov, who is escaping to Charan from Esav. Elifaz is unable to follow through with the plan because of his affinity for Yaakov, having grown up in Yitzchak's home. Yaakov tells Elifaz to take all of his assets, rendering him impoverished, which is comparable to death.

### Lavan

Yaakov arrives in Charan bankrupt, meets his future wife Rachel and is taken to meet his prospective father-in-law, Lavan. Lavan repeatedly cheats Yaakov and eventually shows his true colors, proving that his true desire is to uproot the entire Jewish people (as described in the Passover Haggadah).

### Pharaoh and the Egyptians

Yaakov and his family return to Canaan after twenty-two years and reconcile with Esav. Subsequently, a massive regional famine forces Yaakov to move his family to Egypt. A few generations later, still in Egypt, the descendants of Yaakov (also known as Israel) multiply and greatly prosper, and are perceived as an imminent security threat by Pharaoh, the Egyptian king. Pharaoh subjects the Jews to oppressive slave labor and decrees infanticide for all baby boys.

Following over two-hundred years of ruthless forced labor, God inflicts the Egyptians with ten miraculous plagues spread over ten months, each plague lasting one week. God frees the Jewish nation from Egypt after the tenth plague, and by splitting the Reed Sea, creates an avenue for escape. The mighty Egyptian army drowns in the closing waters of the sea in pursuit of the Jewish people. In recognition of their blatantly miraculous escape, the entire Jewish nation (now numbering approximately two and one-half million) achieves prophecy and in unison sings thanks and praise to God for their redemption in the *Az Yashir* song recorded in Exodus. The neighboring nations are overcome by fear of God and His Jewish people.

### Amalek

The surrounding nations are terrified of God's demonstrated might and of the Jewish nation – save for one brazen people, Amalek. This nation despises God and now the Jewish people who are His representatives. With suicidal chutzpah, Amalek attacks Jewish stragglers among the Jewish people within days of their miraculous crossing through the Reed Sea, en route to receive the Torah at Mount Sinai. So wicked is their defiant denial of God that the Torah mandates that this nation be destroyed.

## Bilaam

After the Jewish people receive the Torah at Mount Sinai, they travel in the desert for forty years, defeating the belligerent Amorite nations. Fearful of further Jewish conquest and aware that the Jews' strength lies in their spiritual connection to God, the nearby Moabite and Midianite nations enlist the services of the greatest non-Jewish prophet, Bilaam, to curse the Jews. An entire section of the Torah recounts the repeated attempts by Bilaam to curse the Jewish people.

The Torah is full of anti-Semitic clashes, showing that hatred towards Jews is nothing new. The third Morasha shiur on our subject will show how the essential reasons for anti-Semitism actually trace back to the motives and behavior of these biblical anti-Semites.

### KEY THEMES OF SECTION I

- ∞ Since the very beginning of Judaism, when Avraham discovered monotheism, there has been hatred towards Jews and the God they represent.
- ∞ Biblical anti-Semites set a pattern for future anti-Semites throughout history until today. This will be explored in the third class of this series.

## SECTION II. ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE PAGAN AND ANCIENT WORLD

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This section highlights anti-Semitism during the First and Second Temple eras, approximately from the 10th century BCE through 70 CE. The Netziv (in his essay on anti-Semitism in Shiur HaShiurim, adapted by Rabbi Moshe Meiselman in his publication Oraissa) explains that Babylonia's destruction of the First Temple and Rome's destruction of the Second Temple and the accompanying exiles were not direct expressions of anti-Semitism per se. Rather, they were Divinely directed consequences for collective flaws and transgressions by the Jewish nation, subsequent to clear admonitions by the Prophets. (See further the third Morasha shiur in this series and the Morasha shiurim on The Three Weeks and Tisha B'Av.)

Still, the historical record shows blatant anti-Semitic hatred in the pagan and ancient world. The basis for this hatred towards Jews was that they embodied a unique outlook and way of life. The Jews' revolutionary declaration of a single God, to the exclusion of all other gods, was in direct opposition to pagan philosophy, which endorsed the worship of many gods, and permitted each nation to worship its own gods while respecting and even worshipping those of others.

There were four major anti-Semitic episodes during this era:

1. the destruction of the First Temple by the Babylonians,
2. the attempted annihilation of the Jewish people during the Persian exile following the

destruction of the First Temple, by a descendent of Amalek (Haman) in coordination with Achashverosh, King of Persia, marked subsequently by the festival of Purim,

3. the Syrian-Greek invasion, decrees and battle against the Jews during the end of the Second Temple period, culminating in the miraculous war and rededication of the Temple commemorated annually by the festival of Chanukah,
4. the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans.

We will now summarize these four episodes:

## **PART A. BABYLONIAN DESTRUCTION OF FIRST TEMPLE**

The First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonian general Nebuchadnezzar in the year 423 BCE.

1. **Rabbi Mordechai Becher, Gateway to Judaism, pp. 177-178 – Babylonians destroy First Temple, and the Jews are exiled to Persia.**

The Jews had been living in Israel continuously since they first entered with Joshua. For 410 years King Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem had been the focal point of the Jewish spiritual and national life in Israel. The first major tragedy that the Jewish people of this era experienced was the division of the country into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judea. The northern kingdom was populated by ten of the twelve tribes. It was eventually invaded by the Assyrians under Sennacherib, who exiled the Jews. Sennacherib's policy of forced exile and assimilation directly caused the loss of the ten tribes to the Jewish people.

Less than a hundred years later, the Jews were dealt another terrible blow. This time, the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar invaded Israel, destroyed the Temple, and exiled almost all of the remaining tribes (Judah, Benjamin, the Priests, and the Levites) to Babylon (modern day Iraq – two weeks by camel, seven minutes by scud).

Jeremiah the prophet had warned that there would be destruction and exile but he also predicted that the Jews would return to Israel and rebuild the Temple and their homeland. Jeremiah even put a date on the return, declaring that the Temple would be rebuilt 70 years after its destruction. Nevertheless, there were many who did not believe that they would ever return to Israel, and felt that this exile signified the end of the special relationship between God and the Jewish people. The Jews quickly became acclimated to the conditions of the exile and built a well organized Jewish community in Babylon and neighboring Persia (modern day Iran).

## 2. **Talmud Bavli, Yoma 9b – The three cardinal transgressions led to the destruction of the First Temple.**

Why was the First Temple destroyed?  
Because of three [evil] matters which prevailed at that time: idolatry, immorality, and bloodshed...

מקדש ראשון מפני מה חרב מפני שלשה דברים  
...שהיו בו עבודה זרה וגלוי עריות ושפיכות דמים...

## **PART B. THE PERSIAN EXILE AND HAMAN'S DECREE TO ANNIHILATE THE JEWS – PURIM**

The miracle of Purim occurred while the Jewish people were undergoing the first of two exiles that were foretold by the prophets. It was a seventy-year exile that was not characterized by great persecution until Haman's decree. Nevertheless, the Jews' spiritual decline at that time was the catalyst to a frightful decree.

### 1. **Rabbi Mordechai Becher, Gateway to Judaism, p. 178 – The Persian Exile and Achashveirosh.**

The Persian Empire eventually took over Babylon, and a military leader by the name of Achashveirosh (Ahasuerus) usurped the throne and became the supreme ruler of the Persian Empire. Based on a miscalculation, he believed that the seventy-year deadline of Jeremiah's prediction [that the Temple would be rebuilt] had already passed...he became convinced that his was the eternal empire. In his mind, the permanent exile of the Jews was an indication of his empire's immortality.

To celebrate his permanent victory, he threw a colossal party in classic sultanate style, using the holy vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had looted from the Temple in Jerusalem. Even more tragic than the party itself, was the fact that the Jews of the capital city, Shushan, also participated in Achashveirosh's celebration, despite the strong objections of their religious leadership. The Talmud tells us that it was this sin that caused the subsequent, nearly fatal, threat to the Jewish people.

### 2. **Morasha Shiur on Purim I – Summary of the Purim story.**

King Achashveirosh of Persia rules the entire civilized world, including 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia. He holds a huge feast for all his subjects in the capital city of Shushan. At the feast, Achashveirosh asks Queen Vashti to parade undressed in front of his guests. She refuses. He gets angry and has her killed.

Against her will, our heroine Esther is chosen in a royal beauty contest to be the new queen. She is taken to the palace, but keeps her Jewish identity secret. Providentially, Mordechai overhears two guards planning to assassinate the king. He tells Esther, and the plot fails. Mordechai's act is recorded in the royal chronicles, yet the king does not know anything about it...

The evil Haman becomes the king's Prime Minister and decrees that everyone must bow to him. Mordechai refuses to bow; and Haman is enraged. Furthermore, when Haman finds out that Mordechai is a Jew, he seeks to destroy the entire Jewish people. Haman complains to the king: "The Jews keep their own laws and refuse to be like everyone else." Haman bribes the king, who is happy to take the money and let Haman issue a decree to destroy the Jews.

On hearing the news of the impending destruction of the entire Jewish people, Mordechai fasts and prays, trying to inspire them to repent. He informs Esther of the evil plan and urges her to plead to the king for mercy...Esther agrees to risk her life and approach the king. She tells Mordechai to have the Jewish people fast and pray for three days.

Esther is received favorably by the king, who agrees to join her at a special banquet, at which she asks if he will come to a second banquet. The night following the first banquet, the king is unable to sleep, and spends the time reviewing the "royal chronicles," and for the first time becomes aware that Mordechai saved his life..

Haman enters the palace...the king asks Haman: "What should I do in order to give someone great honor?" Assuming the king means him, Haman suggests having the person put on royal clothing, ride the king's white horse, and be led through the city in great glory. Achashveirosh likes the idea, and tells Haman to do everything he said...for Mordechai! Mordechai is then paraded on horseback through the streets of Shushan, with Haman leading the way.

At the next banquet, Esther tells the king of her identity and the genocide plan. Outraged, the king demands to know who would dare threaten her people. Esther points to Haman! Haman is aghast. Realizing all is lost, he "falls all over" Esther, pleading for mercy. The king thinks Haman is accosting the queen and Haman is hanged on the same gallows he had prepared for Mordechai..

...The king issues a new decree, giving the Jews the right to defend themselves. The Jews defend themselves, and their enemies cower in terror...

Mordechai and Esther enact an annual holiday with feasting, giving gifts to the poor and food to friends, and reading the Megillah.

## **PART C. THE SYRIAN-GREEK ASSAULT AND THE CHANUKAH MIRACLES**

1. **Rabbi Shraga Simmons, Chanukah, aish.com and Rabbi Mordechai Becher, Gateway to Judaism, pp. 166-167 – The Syrian Greek Assault and the Chanukah Miracles.**

The Hebrew word Chanukah means "dedication." In the 2nd century BCE, during the time of the Second Holy Temple, the Syrian-Greek regime of Antiochus IV sought to pull Jews away from Judaism, with the hopes of assimilating them into Greek culture.

Antiochus outlawed Jewish observance – including circumcision, Shabbat, and Torah study – under penalty of death. As well, many Jews – called Hellenists – began to assimilate into Greek culture, taking on Greek names and marrying non-Jews. This began to decay the foundation of Jewish life and practice.

When the Greeks challenged the Jews to sacrifice a pig to a Greek god, a few courageous Jews took to the hills of Judea in open revolt against this threat to Jewish life. Led by a family of *Kohanim* “Priests”: Mattathias (Matityahu) son of Yochanan the High Priest (*Kohen Gadol*) and his five sons. Known as the Hasmoneans (*Chasmonaim*), they were led by their brother Judah (Yehudah) “the Maccabee.” Although from a military perspective, their cause seemed hopeless, this small army began a guerilla war against the powerful and massive Greek occupying army.

Antiochus sent thousands of well-armed troops to crush the rebellion, but after three years the Maccabees beat incredible odds and miraculously succeeded in driving the foreigners initially from Jerusalem and subsequently from their land. The victory was on the scale of Israel defeating the combined super-powers of today.

Jewish fighters entered Jerusalem and found the Holy Temple in shambles and desecrated with idols. The Hasmoneans cleansed the Temple and re-dedicated it on the 25th of Kislev. When it came time to re-light the Menorah, they searched the entire Temple, but found only one jar of pure oil bearing the seal of the High Priest. The Hasmoneans lit the Menorah anyway and were rewarded with a miracle: That small jar of oil burned for eight days, until a new supply of oil could be brought. The miracle of the oil was understood as a sign from Heaven that the military victory was indeed brought about by Divine intervention, that the Maccabees had acted in accordance with God’s wishes, and that the Jewish people would survive and continue to bring the light of Torah to the world.

The following year, the Sanhedrin declared a new festival of gratitude and praise to God for the miracle of Jewish spiritual survival. Beginning on the 25th of Kislev, and lasting eight days, they called it Chanukah, meaning “dedication” (of the Temple). This festival commemorates the miracles of Chanukah for all time.

## 2. **Otzar HaMidrashim, Chanukah, p. 189 – The Greeks decreed against mitzvot that symbolize the Jewish covenant with God.**

At that time the Greeks arose over the Jewish people and nullified the covenant which the Jews made with their God: Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh [the Jewish calendar system] and Brit Milah.

עתה באו ונעלה עליהם ונבטל מהם את הברית אשר כרת להם אלהיהם שבת ראש חדש ומילה.

Jewish family life is founded on holiness and spiritual purity. The Greeks attempted to eradicate this element of Jewish life and thereby undermine the family structure of the Jewish people.

### 3. **Rashi, Shabbat 23a – Jewish brides were accosted by Greek governors.**

The Greeks decreed that all Jewish brides had to “visit” the foreign governor prior to their wedding night.

שגזרו יוונים על כל בתולות הנשואות להיבעל  
לטפסר תחלה.

We further see the anti-Semitic attitude expressed by the Syrian Greeks in the quote below.

### 4. **Apion (Homeric scholar), History of Egypt, recounting what a Greek prisoner is reported to have told Antiochus when he entered the Temple (quoted in Josephus, Against Apion I, 91-96) – Greek origins of the blood libel.**

The unutterable law of the Jews...they would kidnap a Greek foreigner, fatten him up for a year, and then convey him to a wood, where they slew him, sacrificed his body with their customary ritual, partook of his flesh, and, while immolating the Greek, swore an oath of hostility to the Greeks.

## PART D. ROMAN DESTRUCTION OF SECOND TEMPLE

The Second Temple was destroyed in the year 70 CE by the Romans under the leadership of the General Titus. The Romans initially laid siege to Jerusalem and breached the city walls on the Seventeenth of Tamuz.

### 1. **Talmud Bavli, Yoma 9b – Baseless hatred among Jews led to the destruction of the Second Temple.**

But why was the Second Temple destroyed? Were the Jews not occupied with Torah, mitzvot, and kind deeds? The Second Temple was destroyed because there was unjustified hatred between Jews (*sinat chinam*). This teaches that unjustified hatred is equated with the three transgressions [that caused the destruction of the First Temple] – idolatry, immorality, and bloodshed combined.

אבל מקדש שני שהיו עוסקין בתורה ובמצות  
וגמילות חסדים מפני מה חרב מפני שהיתה בו  
שנאת חנם ללמדך ששקולה שנאת חנם כנגד  
שלוש עבירות עבודה זרה גלוי עריות ושפיכות  
דמים...

### 2. **Rabbi Mordechai Becher, Gateway to Judaism, p. 235 – The exile from Israel is responsible for much anti-Semitism over the past 2000 years.**

The destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the Jewish people from their land were, without doubt, the greatest tragedies in Jewish history. Spiritually, they signified that the Jewish people had alienated themselves from God: This distance is acutely felt and powers our yearning to return to the devotion of former years. In physical terms, these two events were the ultimate cause of all the pogroms, inquisitions, *jihads*, expulsions

and suffering of our people for more than 2,000 years.

Throughout Jewish history, the Ninth of Av [Tishah B'Av, the date when both Temples were destroyed] has recurred as a day of calamity. The Jews were expelled from England on Tishah B'Av, 1290, and the Spanish Inquisition culminated in the expulsion of the Jews from Spain on Tishah B'Av, 1492. Germany declared war on Russia on Tishah B'Av in 1914, precipitating the First World War, which had tragic repercussions on the Jews of Europe and also ultimately led to the Second World War and the Holocaust.

3. **Tacitus (renowned Roman historian, 1st Century CE, translated in the book *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, Menachem Stern) – The prejudice of the Jews.**

[The Jews] reveal a stubborn attachment to one another...which contrasts with their implacable hatred for the rest of mankind. . . toward every other people they feel only hate and enmity, they sit apart at meals and they sleep apart, and although as a race they are prone to lust, they abstain from intercourse with foreign women...The Jews regard as profane all that which we hold sacred... The Jews regard it as a crime to kill any newborn infant.

4. **Philostratus (a third-century teacher and inhabitant of Athens and Rome), *The life of Apollonius of Tyana*, cited in Menachem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*, 2:341 – The separation of the Jews.**

For the Jews have long been in revolt not only against the Romans, but against humanity; and a race that has made its own life apart and irreconcilable, that cannot share with the rest of mankind in the pleasures of the table nor join in their libations or prayers or sacrifices, are separated from ourselves by a greater fault than divides us from Sura or Bactra of the more distant Indies.

## KEY THEMES OF SECTION II

- ⌘ Anti-Semitic hatred in the pagan and ancient world is brought in historical records. This hatred towards Jews was based on their unique outlook and way of life. The Jews' revolutionary declaration of a single God, to the exclusion of all other gods, was in direct opposition to pagan philosophy.
- ⌘ The Anti-Semitism demonstrated during the destruction of both Temples, as well as at the times of Purim and Chanukah, came as a result of collective flaws and transgressions by the Jewish nation, subsequent to clear admonitions by the Prophets.
- ⌘ Non-Jewish philosophers and teachers of the early centuries of the Common Era recorded their blatantly anti-Semitic sentiments, written as if their claims were based on undeniable fact.

## SECTION III. CHRISTIAN ANTI-SEMITISM

The hatred of Christianity for Judaism is rooted in the beginnings of the Christian faith, which began as a branch of Judaism. Jesus was a Jew; his disciples were Jewish, and he preached almost exclusively to Jews. Yet, the Jews rejected him. Christianity could not forgive this “crime,” damning the Jews for the rejection of Jesus, and placing upon their heads every evil and libel that can possibly be imagined. To solve the theological difficulty of the Jews and their “chosen nation” status, the Christian Fathers produced the substitution theory, claiming the title of Israel for themselves. The ongoing existence of the Jews, which then presented a thorny theological problem, was interpreted as a continual lesson to the world, demonstrating the punishment for those who dare deny the “good news” of the Christian messiah. The terrible persecutions, expulsions, and murders that Jews suffered at the hands of Christians throughout the ages, were the outcome of this theological position.

1. **Matthew 27:25 – The New Testament canonizes anti-Semitism by placing the blame for the killing of Jesus on all Jews of all generations.**

Let his blood be on our heads and the heads of our children.

2. **John 8:43-44, 47 – Jews are of the Devil.**

Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word? You are of your father, the Devil, and your will is to do your father’s desire. . .The reason why you do not hear [the words of God revealed in Jesus] is because you are not of God.

3. **Hyppolitus of Rome (born 170 CE), Treatise Against the Jews 6, ANF 5.220 – Damning of Jews by the Church Fathers.**

And surely, you [the Jews] have been darkened in the eyes of your soul with a darkness, utter and everlasting.

4. **Origen (185-254 CE), Against Celsus 4.22, ANF 4.506 – The Jews are eternally damned for their crime.**

And we say with confidence that they [the Jews] will never be restored to their former condition. For they committed a crime of the most unhallowed kind ...”

5. **Lactantius, Divine Institutes 4.11, ANF 7.109 – Substitution of the Jews by another nation.**

For unless they [the Jews] did this [repent], and laying aside their vanities, return to their God, it would come to pass that He would change His covenant, that is, bestow

the inheritance of eternal life upon foreign nations, and collect to Himself a more faithful people out of those who were aliens by birth...On account of these impieties of theirs He cast them off forever.

In 1478, the Spanish Inquisition was established to maintain Catholic orthodoxy in Spain. This led to the expulsion of the Jews.

6. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alhambra\\_Decree - The Spanish Inquisition and Jewish Expulsions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alhambra_Decree_-_The_Spanish_Inquisition_and_Jewish_Expulsions).

From the 13th to the 16th centuries many European countries expelled the Jews from their territory on at least 15 occasions. Spain was preceded by England, France and some German states, among many others, and succeeded by at least five more expulsions. In Spain, the hostility toward Jews was brought to a climax by “the Catholic Monarchs” –Ferdinand II and Isabella I, whose marriage in 1469 formed a personal union of the crowns of Aragon and Castile, with coordinated policies between their distinct kingdoms.

Ferdinand and Isabella were disturbed at reports that some Jewish converts to Christianity were insincere in their conversion, continued to practice Judaism in secret and were trying to draw other *conversos* back into the Jewish fold.

The Edict of Expulsion was issued on March 31, 1492 by the joint Catholic Monarchs of Spain (Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon) ordering the expulsion of Jews from the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon and its territories and possessions by July 31, 1492 of that year...In the Edict, Jews were accused of trying “to subvert their holy Catholic faith and trying to draw faithful Christians away from their beliefs.”... The punishment for any Jew who did not convert or leave by the deadline was death without trial.

Even when Martin Luther started a radical reformation of Christianity, the hatred of Jews remained a crucial element of Christianity’s new branches.

7. [Martin Luther, On the Jews and Their Lies, in LW 47:138–39 – God’s rejection of the Jews](#).

Listen, Jew, are you aware that Jerusalem and your sovereignty, together with your temple and priesthood, have been destroyed for over 1,460 years?...For such ruthless wrath of God is sufficient evidence that they assuredly have erred and gone astray... Therefore this work of wrath is proof that the Jews, surely rejected by God, are no longer His people, and neither is He any longer their God.

The Christian hatred for the Jews continued into modern times in its most insane forms.

## 8. **La-Cruila Cattolica (semi-official Vatican journal), March 1882 – The blood libel.**

Every practicing Hebrew worthy of that name is obliged even now, in conscience, to use in food, in drink, in circumcision, and in various other rites of his religious and civil life the fresh or fried blood of a Christian child, under pain of infringing his laws and passing among his acquaintances for a bad Hebrew...All this is still true and faithfully observed in the present century.

The contempt for Jews that was so much a part of the Church's teachings generated a lingering emotional attitude that made even secularized Europeans open to hearing a secular theory justifying Jew hatred. The quote below illustrates that traditional Jew hatred helped the Nazis, generally regarded as anti-Christian, find Christian allies due to their shared anti-Semitic goals.

## 9. **Archbishop Kmetko's response to Rabbi Ungar's petition on behalf of Slovakia's Jews, cited in Min Hametzar, pp. 24-25 – A Christian response.**

This is not just a deportation of the Jews. There you will not die of hunger and pestilence; there you will be killed, young and old, women and children, and that will be your punishment for your killing our Savior.

## 10. **Ahad Ha'am, Selective Writings, p. 203 – The rampant acceptance of the blood libel proves that the majority of the world may be mistaken.**

This accusation is the solitary case in which the general acceptance of an idea about ourselves does not make us doubt whether all the world can be wrong, and we right, because it is based on an absolute lie. Every Jew who has been brought up among Jews knows as an indisputable fact that throughout the length and breadth of Jewry there is not a single individual who drinks human blood for religious purposes..."But," you ask, "is it possible that everybody can be wrong, and the Jews right?" Yes, it is possible: the blood accusation proves it possible.

### KEY THEMES OF SECTION III

- ❧ **Christian hatred for Judaism is rooted in the beginnings of the Christian faith. The Jewish rejection of Jesus as their savior prompted Christian leaders to damn the Jews and to claim that the Jews no longer held the status of the "chosen nation."**
- ❧ **Christian theology explained the ongoing existence of the Jews as a continual lesson to the world, demonstrating the punishment for those who deny the Christian messiah. The terrible persecutions, expulsions, and murders that Jews suffered at the hands of Christians throughout the ages, were the outcome of this theological position.**

- ☞ **Christian anti-Semitism brought on the recurring blood libels, founded on outright falsehood.**
- ☞ **Traditional Jew hatred helped the Nazis, generally regarded as anti-Christian, find Christian allies due to their shared anti-Semitic goals.**

## SECTION IV. ISLAMIC ANTI-SEMITISM

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Like Jesus before him, Muhammad, the self-proclaimed prophet and founder of Islam, sought recognition by the Jews. No other group could so validate his religious claims since Islam claims that the Koran supersedes both Christianity (New Testament) and Judaism (Torah).

Muhammad initially incorporated much Jewish law and belief into his religious system (included prayer towards Jerusalem, before it was changed to Mecca; observance of the Yom Kippur fast, until it was changed to Ramadan; strict monotheism, dietary restrictions, and so on). Nonetheless, the Jews rejected his new religion. Muhammad therefore turned against the Jews, fighting them in battle and cursing them in his writings. This animosity, though not quite equaling the hatred of the Christians, has continued throughout subsequent centuries.

Recently, since the founding of the Jewish state, Islam has led the world in its anti-Semitic rhetoric, writings, and actions. This anti-Semitism is directed against all Jews, and not limited to Zionists.

1. **S. D. Goitein (historian of Jewish life in the Arab world), *Jews and Arabs*, 1955, p.64 – The source of Islamic animosity towards Jews.**

It is only natural that Muhammad's prophetic claims could not tolerate as a neighbour a large monotheistic community which categorically denied his claim as a prophet, and probably also ridiculed his inevitable blunders...

2. **Koran 4.46, 5.33 – The unbelief of Jews.**

But on account of their breaking their covenant, we cursed them and made their hearts hard...but Allah (God) has cursed them [the Jews] on account of their unbelief, so they do not believe but a little.

3. **Koran 2.140, 3.67 – Islamic version of substitution (making Abraham into a Muslim).**

Ibrahim (Abraham) was not a Jew, nor a Christian, but he was [an] upright [man], a Muslim, and he was not one of the polytheists...Nay! Do you say that Ibrahim and Ismail and Yaqoub and the tribes were Jews or Christians? Say: Are you better knowing or Allah?

4. **Koran 2.61 – Damnation of the Jews (this verse was used by President Anwar el-Saddat in 1972, in lecturing soldiers of the importance to rid the Arabian peninsula of Jews).**

...And humiliation and wretchedness were stamped upon them and they were visited with wrath from Allah. That was because they disbelieved in Allah's revelations and slew the prophets wrongfully. That was for their disobedience and transgression.

5. **Salo W. Baron, Social and Religious History 3:141 – Eleventh century Islamic persecution.**

...Each Jew had to have a stamp of lead...hang from his neck, on which the word *dhimmi* (non-Muslim) was inscribed. On women he likewise imposed two distinguishing marks: the shoes worn by each woman had to be one red and one black. She also had to carry on her neck or attached to her shoe a small brass bell...And the Gentiles used to ridicule Jews, the mob and children often assaulting Jews in all the streets of Baghdad.

6. **Edward Lane, An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians, p. 512 – Egypt (a relatively tolerant regime) in the nineteenth century.**

...They used often to be jostled in the streets of Cairo, and sometimes beaten merely for passing on the right hand of a Muslim. At present...they scarcely ever dare to utter a word of abuse when reviled or beaten unjustly by the meanest Arab or Turk; for many a Jew has been put to death upon a false and malicious accusation of uttering disrespectful words against the Koran or the Prophet. It is common to hear an Arab abuse his jaded ass, and after applying to him various derogatory epithets, end by calling the beast a Jew.

7. **Dr. Ma'ruf al-Dawalibi, Saudi Arabian delegate to the UN Human Rights Commission, December 1984 – Islamic takeover of Christian anti-Semitism.**

Jews have indeed been the victims of discriminations throughout the centuries. But why? Let them answer this question themselves. The Talmud says that any Jew who does not drink every year the blood of a non-Jew will be damned forever.

8. **Hamas 1988 Charter – Hitler's Islamic Heirs (the expression was coined by historian Yehudah Bauer).**

[The Jews] were behind the French Revolution [and] the Communist Revolution...

They were behind World War I...they were behind World War II, through which they made huge financial gains by trading in armaments, and paved the way for the establishment of their state...There is no war going on anywhere, without having their finger in it...Their plan is embodied in The Protocols of the Elders of Zion, and their present conduct is the best proof of what we are saying.

#### KEY THEMES OF SECTION IV

- ∞ Because of the Jewish rejection of Muhammad, the self-proclaimed prophet and founder of Islam, and because of their dismissal of the tenets of Islam, he fought them in battle and cursed them in his writings.
- ∞ Islamic animosity, though not quite equaling the hatred of the Christians, has continued throughout subsequent centuries.
- ∞ Recently, since the founding of the Jewish state, Islam has adopted Christian and Nazi dogma and has led the world in its anti-Semitic rhetoric, writings, and actions. This anti-Semitism is directed against all Jews.

## SECTION V. ENLIGHTENMENT ANTI-SEMITISM (1650'S TO THE 1780'S)

As part of the historical survey, it is important to note that although the European Enlightenment moved away from traditional Christianity, hatred of the Jews remained firmly embedded in the Gentile psyche during that era. Many of the leaders of the Enlightenment were avid anti-Semites, whose writings were later used by Nazi propagandists.

1. **Voltaire (the single most famous figure of the Enlightenment which is at times called "The Age of Voltaire"), Dictionnaire Philosophique (under the entry: Jew) – Voltaire's view of the Jews.**

...In short they are a totally ignorant nation who, for many years, have combined contemptible miserliness and the most revolting superstition with a violent hatred of all those nations that have tolerated them. Nevertheless, they should not be burned at the stake...Your priests have always sacrificed human victims with their sacred hands.

2. **Arthur Hertzberg, the French Enlightenment and the Jews, p. 10 – Voltaire's Jews.**

He ruled the Jew to be outside society and to be hopelessly alien even to the future age of enlightened man.

3. **Jean-Baptiste de Mirabaud, permanent secretary of the French Academy – Why are the Jews hated?**

Not only did all the nations despise the Jew; they even hated them and believed that they were as justified in hating as in despising them. They were hated because they were known to hate other men; they were despised because they were seen observing customs which were thought ridiculous.

Whereas once they had been hated for denying Christianity, now they could be hated for producing Christianity.

4. **Paul Henri Dietrich d'Holbach, German baron and philosopher – Polluters of the world.**

It must in fact be admitted that even while they perished the Jews had their revenge on the Romans, their conquerors. From the ruins of their country, a fanatic sect emerged which gradually polluted the whole Empire.

5. **Immanuel Kant, cited in Ben Sasson, History of the Jewish People, p. 746 – The only solution is to abandon Judaism.**

The euthanasia of Judaism can only be achieved by means of a pure, moral religion, and the abandonment of all [its] old legal regulations.

6. **Matthew Tindal (eminent and influential English deist, 1657-1733) – An Enlightenment view of the Jews.**

[The Jews are] an illiterate, barbarous and ridiculous people.

Between the Enlightenment and the rise of the Nazis there were many forms of anti-Semitism. One of the more historically important of them was Houston Stewart Chamberlain's 1899 book, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, which was very widely read in Germany and a clear influence on Hitler.

7. **Prager and Telushkin, Why the Jews, pp. 144-45 – “Intellectual” critique of Jewish values.**

According to *Foundations*, the future of humanity will be determined by the outcome of the epochal struggle between two “races”: the Teutonic (“Aryan”) and the Jewish (“Semitic”). The racial thesis of *Foundations* notwithstanding, Chamberlain's real opposition was to the Jews' values and theology, not to their race and biology.

This fact was repeatedly made clear throughout his two-volume work. One would expect a racial anti-Semite to hate all Jews, but Chamberlain painstakingly disassociated himself from such “crude” anti-Semitism: he repeatedly denied any “personal animus against individuals belonging to the Jewish nation.” In fact, Chamberlain dedicated Foundations of the Nineteenth Century to a Jew, Julius Wiesner, once his professor at the University of Vienna.

It was not hatred of the Jews as a race that animated the foremost advocate of racial anti-Semitism. He hated what the Jews stood for, and their success in overturning others’ values: “I cannot help shuddering...at the portentous, irremediable mistake the world made in accepting the traditions of this wretched little nation...as the basis of its belief.” He hated the Jews for their monotheism and moral values, which prevented the natural human being from possessing unrestricted freedom: “The Jew came into our gay world and spoiled everything with his ominous concept of sin, his law, and his cross.”

## KEY THEMES OF SECTION V

- Even though the European Enlightenment moved away from traditional Christianity, its proponents retained the Christian hatred of the Jews.
- Many Enlightenment leaders were avid anti-Semites, whose writings were later the basis of Nazi propaganda.

## SECTION VI. NAZI ANTI-SEMITISM

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The Nazi Holocaust has rightly been described as the culmination of centuries of Christian and European anti-Semitism. But Nazi anti-Semitism added a new element in that it was directed at the Jews as a “race” not as a religion. Previously, a Jew could escape death or persecution through conversion. Provided his assailants were convinced of his authenticity, the converted Jew was accepted as a Christian (or Muslim), and welcomed to his native community. The Nazi ideology, however, maintained that the fixed “traits of character” displayed by the Jews could only be accounted for by race. Even conversion could not save the Jews caught in the Nazi vice of wartime Europe.

### 1. **Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, p. 312 – The same Jew.**

In his new language [the Jew] will express the old ideas; his inner nature has not changed...The Jew...can speak a thousand languages and nevertheless remains a Jew. His traits of character have remained the same...It is always the same Jew.

## 2. **Adolf Hitler, Reichstag speech of January 1939 – The traditional libel of world-domination.**

In my life I have often been a prophet and...today I will once more be a prophet. If the international Jewish financiers in and outside Europe should succeed in plunging the nations once more into a world war, then the result will be not the Bolshevization of the world and thus the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe.

The Nazis could not have succeeded in murdering so many Jews without the assistance of the local populations, whose hatred of Jews was based on tradition, not on Nazi ideology. Nevertheless, there were instances where some Jews were saved by the acts of righteous Gentiles.

## 3. **Shmuel Ettinger, Modern Period, p. 1034 – European collaboration.**

The most active accomplices of the Germans in these acts of extermination were the Ukrainians and Lithuanians, but they had many helpers among the Croatians, Rumanians, Hungarians and Slovaks...Their police personnel were willing to search tirelessly for days and even weeks in order to hunt down one concealed Jewish child... But it is not by chance that Poland was chosen as the country of extermination. The Polish people (in general) did not lift a finger to help the Jews, even in the worst days of mass murder, or during the Warsaw ghetto uprising. There were many Poles who handed escaping Jews over to the Nazis. Nevertheless, there were some Poles, mainly in the monasteries, who were shocked at the brutal murders, and particularly the slaughter of young children, and attempted to save them. Through them several thousand Jewish children were saved in Poland. Though Poland was notorious for her anti-Semitism, it is a fact that the number of Jews hidden and saved there by the local population was many times higher than in Soviet Ukraine and Soviet White Russia.

(See further the NLE Morasha classes on the Holocaust.)

### KEY THEMES OF SECTION VI

- ☞ In contrast to Christian and European anti-Semitism, which was based on Judaism as a religion, Nazi anti-Semitism was based on their hate for the Jews as a race.
- ☞ According to Nazi ideology, the difference between Jews and Gentiles stemmed from their inner nature. Therefore, even conversion could not save the Jew from persecution and murder.
- ☞ The Nazis were assisted by local Gentile populations, who readily informed on hidden Jews. However, there were some righteous Gentiles who saved Jews throughout the Holocaust.

## SECTION VII. ANTI-ZIONISM: ANTI-SEMITISM IS NOT JUST HISTORY

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Anti-Semitism is not just history; it is current events. A major element of today's anti-Zionism is unconscious or veiled anti-Semitism. After the horrors of the Holocaust, expressing hatred of Jews, which had previously been an acceptable public stance, became taboo. Anti-Zionists, therefore, vigorously deny being categorized as anti-Semites. And many anti-Zionists are not, in fact, consciously anti-Semitic. Often, however, the same, age-old anti-Semitism breaks through the anti-Zionist façade.

1. **Amos Kenan, in *The New Left and the Jews*, ed. Mordecai S. Chertoff, Pitman Publishing, 1971, p. 311 – Throwing Jews or Zionists into the sea.**

Shukairy [the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization before Yasir Arafat] used to say that the Jews should be driven into the sea. After the 1967 defeat, it became apparent that a slogan of this sort was not good public relations for the Arab cause. So today, only the Zionists are to be thrown into the sea. The only trouble is that when the Arabs get through pushing all the Zionists into the sea, there won't be a Jew left in Israel...

2. **Yakov Malik, Soviet ambassador to the UN, October 1971 – Obvious substitution of the term “Zionists” for “Jews.”**

The Zionists have come forward with the theory of the Chosen People, an absurd ideology.

Being that only traditional Judaism, and not the Zionist movement, discusses being the “chosen people,” Mr. Malik's slur disclosed his undercover anti-Semitic sentiments.

3. **Saluk Dasuki, *America: A Zionist Colony – Jews are Zionists*.**

Jews, whether they have preserved their religion or whether they have adopted other religions, are known in the U.S. under the collective name Zionists.

4. **Dr. Robert Moss, president of the United Church, commenting on the anti-Zionist UN resolution of 1975 – Zionism and Judaism.**

We should not be deceived by the use of the term Zionism. The sponsors of this resolution mean by it Jews and Judaism as well as the State of Israel.

That Moslems hate Jews, and Russians support the Arabs for their own reasons, is not so interesting. What is fascinating is how much anti-Semitism is mixed in with much Leftist

opposition to Israel. Prager and Telushkin show this well, but even more revealing is the writing of Ellen Willis, an author, who herself is a radical Leftist. The article quoted here should be read in its entirety by anyone interested in looking at a nuanced discussion of a complex issue. Willis acknowledges that from various leftist perspectives there are real problems with the very idea of a Jewish state and she writes that there are valid criticisms to be made of Israeli policies. But she points out that clearly something else, something distorted, is taking place.

5. [Ellen Willis “Is There Still A Jewish Question: Why I Am an Anti-Anti-Zionist,” Tabletmag.com, Aug. 13, 2014 – What nerve does the existence of the State of Israel hit?](#)

Along with this one-sided view of the conflict, the left has focused on Israeli acts of domination and human rights violations with an intense and consistent outrage that it fails to direct toward comparable or worse abuses elsewhere, certainly toward the unvarnished tyrannies in the Middle East (where, for instance, is the divestment campaign against Saudi Arabia?). No, I’m not saying it’s reasonable to demand that critics of Israel simultaneously oppose all the violence, misery, and despotism in the world, or that complaints against Israel are invalid because Arab regimes are worse. Inevitably, at any given time some countries, some conflicts will capture people’s imagination and indignation more than others – not because they are worse but because they somehow hit a nerve, become larger than themselves, take on a symbolic dimension. But that is exactly my point: left animus (hostility) toward Israel is not a simple, self-evident product of the facts. What is the nerve that Israel hits?

6. [Ibid. – Comparing Israel to apartheid South Africa or to the Nazi regime denies the factual differences.](#)

Underlining this question are the hyperbolic comparisons that animate the anti-Israel brief, beginning with the now standard South Africa comparison—the accusation that Israel is a “settler state” and an “apartheid state”—which has inspired the calls for divestment and for a boycott against Israeli academics. The South African regime, of course, was one whose essence was a proudly white racist ideology, a draconian system of legal segregation, and the denial of all political rights to the huge majority of people. To see Israel through this grid is to ignore a great many things: that Israel was settled primarily by refugees from genocide in Europe and oppression in Arab countries; that while Palestinian Israelis suffer from discrimination they are nevertheless citizens who vote, organize political parties, and participate in the government; that the occupation, while egregious (conspicuous), came about as a result not of aggressive settlement but of defensive war; that it continues because of rejectionism on both sides; that there is a difference between the nationalist and ultra-Orthodox militants who dream of a greater Israel and the majority of Israelis who once supported peace but turned to Sharon out of fear and cynicism. As for Israeli academics, they are independent and disproportionately active in opposing government policy, which leaves the boycott movement with no plausible rationale.

Even more fantastic is the Nazi comparison, often expressed in metaphors (Israeli soldiers as SS men, and so on). I imagine that most perpetrators of this equation, if pressed, would concede that Israel is not a totalitarian dictatorship with a program of world domination, nor has it engaged in the systematic murder of millions of people on the grounds that they are a subhuman race. But why do these tropes have such appeal? Where does it come from, the impulse to go beyond taking Israel to task for its concrete misdeeds, to lump it with the worst, most criminal states in history? That Israel is seen as a Western graft in the Arab Middle East (a view Israelis themselves would contest, given that most of the population comes from the Middle East and North Africa) and a surrogate for American power contributes to its symbolic importance as a target, as does an unconscious condescension toward Arabs that leads to a double standard of moral expectations for Israel and its neighbors. But it's impossible not to notice how the runaway inflation of Israel's villainy aligns with ingrained cultural fantasies about the iniquity and power of Jews; or how the traditional pariah status of Jews has been replicated by a Jewish pariah state. And the special fury and vitriol that greet any attempt to bring up this subject in left circles further suggest that more is at stake here than an ordinary political dispute—just as more is at stake in the Israel-Palestine clash than an ordinary border dispute....

Ms. Willis, if from a very different perspective from our own, answers her question the same way we do. The Left's exaggerated hatred for Israel stems from the ancient hatred for the Jews as God's Chosen people.

**6. Ibid. – The anti-Zionist stance is actually based on resentment for the morality that Judaism introduced to the world.**

...Many on the left view this wave of anti-Semitism as just another expression, however unfortunately couched, of justified rage at Israel—whether at the occupation and the escalating destruction of the West Bank or at the state's existence per se. In either case, the conflation of “Zionists” and “Jews” is regarded as a misunderstanding of the politically uneducated. Which is to say, again, that Israel is The Problem — not only for Palestinians but for Jews as well. This is a serious failure of imagination, for in fact Israel's conflict with the Arab world owes more to the peculiar role played by the Jews in history, culture, and the Judeo-Christian-Islamic psyche than vice versa...

Half a century ago, Israel was supposed to have put a period to the long sordid history of Christian, European anti-Semitism, with its genocidal climax. Instead it turned out that the Europeans had in effect displaced their “Jewish problem,” which Hitler had failed to “solve,” onto new territory...

These developments exposed the core Zionist belief, that an end to the Jews' stateless condition would “normalize” Jewish life, as tragically naive...

If Israel's conflict with the Palestinians and the Arabs generally cannot be understood without reference to the larger question of relations between Jews and the rest of the

world, what of its audience—that is, the international community, including the American left? I'd argue that no one, Jewish or not, brought up in a Christian or Islamic-dominated culture can come to this issue without baggage, since the patriarchal monotheism that governs our sexually repressive structure of morality, and all the ambivalence that goes with it, was invented by Jews. The concept of one transcendent God has a double meaning: it proclaims the subordination of all human authority to a higher reality at the same time that, codified as "God the Father," it affirms the patriarchal hierarchy. The Jews, in their mythic role as the "chosen people" destined to achieve the redemption of the world through their adherence to God's law, embody a similar duality: they are avatars of spiritual freedom on the one hand, patriarchal authority and the control of desire on the other. In relation to Christianity and Islam, the Jews are the authors of morality but also the stubborn nay-sayers, setting themselves apart, refusing to embrace Jesus or Mohammed as the fulfillment of their quest...

Recent events show us clearly that if the form of anti-Semitism has changed, it is still not mere history. The article quoted below makes this clear. It too should be read in its entirety.

7. **Ron Rosenbaum, [The Real #GenocideinGaza](#), *Slate Magazine*, Aug. 25 2014 –  [Hamas, in comparison to Hitler's relatively subtle goal of exterminating the entire Jewish nation, has stated their dream of Jewish genocide openly.](#)**

[After a clear description of how Hamas's official charter actually calls for the genocide of all Jews] You want to talk about Hitler analogies: Even Hitler never became that specific in *Mein Kampf*. Many scholars believe that Hitler gave the wartime extermination order orally, although in a 1939 pre-war speech, he pledged himself to the "destruction of World Jewry"—a speech that was not taken literally by most of the world. Compared to Hamas, Hitler was cautious, politic. Of course he wanted to exterminate the Jews, but he didn't write it into the constitution of the Third Reich.

So there it is for all the world to see. The real #GenocideinGaza. Still a dream, true, but a dream that could well come true. It's not as if it would be an unimaginable task to murder another 5 or 6 million Jews just over the border. The thousands of rockets Hamas has fired at Israel since they took over Gaza—rockets that tried and (mostly) failed to kill noncombatants—could easily become far more deadly and sophisticated. If their dreams come true, maybe tactical nukes.

As the brilliant Holocaust writer Imre Kertesz wrote, "Before Auschwitz, Auschwitz was unimaginable. That is no longer so today. Because Auschwitz in fact occurred it has now been established in our imaginations as a firm possibility. What we are able to imagine, especially because it once was, can be again."

For a quarter century now this genocidal Hamas pledge has been there for the world to see. Genocide, not some metaphor ... — a mission statement. I find the unwillingness of the world to take this into account, to take it seriously, to understand the Israeli response to it, the Israeli rage generated by genocidal threat that dictates what to some

— including myself at times — may seem a disproportionate response, is probably the response to it, the Israeli rage generated by genocidal threat that dictates what to some — including myself at times — may seem a disproportionate response, is probably the most telling disconnect between the reality and the reporting on the Gaza conflict. Because believe me, the Israeli people are not ignorant of the Hamas Covenant, they are not unaware of its seriousness and the consequences thereof.

8. **Ibid. – The #GenocideinGaza stance, as well as recent anti-Jewish assaults in Europe, discloses genuine anti-Semitism, not anti-Zionism.**

Some foreign Hamas supporters try to play down the covenant or — seriously — say it should be of little concern. True it has been there for a quarter century from the very founding of Hamas and no Hamas leader has renounced it. And at its heart is a command from the Prophet with the very day of judgment at stake in the success of the genocidal mission. But one (Jewish) defender of Hamas told me not long ago, the genocidal imperative should just be regarded as if it were boilerplate rhetoric and, besides, he said, Hamas was only really concerned with murdering the 5 million Jews of Israel, not all Jews in the world. I believe he thought I would find this reassuring...

But the ignoramus comparing Israelis to Nazis and Gaza to genocide while ignoring actual ongoing genocide in Syria and Iraq must be seen as an excrescence of the enduring double standard to which Israelis — and Jews — are subjected.

I'm sorry ... Those using slogans like #GenocideinGaza have left behind any fig leaf for what seems clear to me is a twisted joy of an excuse for Jew-hatred, a hatred it now seems clear was never eradicated, just briefly driven underground, as the multiplicity of chants "death to the Jews" (not to the Israelis but the Jews) sweeping Europe, makes clear. It suggests that there is in Europe (to say nothing of the Middle East) an adamant anti-Semitism that rises to the surface whenever it is possible to malign Jews, instigate pogroms (as we've already seen in France), beat Jewish passersby, burn synagogues, and (as in Belgium) just murder Jewish families. Perhaps more than anything, Gaza gives Europeans a fraudulent but apparently satisfying way of exculpating their entire continent's complicity in Hitler's genocide. ("See the Jews were just as bad, just like Nazis.")

Everyone debates the line between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism. I think the #GenocideinGaza analogists have shown us one place it can be found. Those who use it give themselves away.

A blunt version of this basic point which can be accurately directed at many Leftists today:

8. **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., responding to a black student's tirade against Zionism; quoted in William Korey, Midstream, May 1976, p. 6 – Anti-Zionism is anti-Semitism.**

When people criticize Zionists they mean Jews. You're talking anti-Semitism.

## KEY THEMES OF SECTION VII

- ⌘ Though often disguised as anti-Zionism, Anti-Semitism is still prevalent today. Since express hatred of Jews has become taboo, leftists prefer to call themselves anti-Zionists. However, their true animosity towards all Jews, not just Zionists, has exposed their real, perhaps subconscious, attitude.
- ⌘ Comparisons of Israel to apartheid South Africa or to Nazism deny the blatant factual differences between them.
- ⌘ The anti-Zionist stance is based on resentment for the morality that Judaism introduced to the world.
- ⌘ The #GenocideinGaza stance, as well as recent anti-Jewish assaults in Europe, stems from traditional anti-Semitism, not anti-Zionism.

## SECTION VIII. THE UNIQUENESS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

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Gustavo Perednick, an Argentinean-born Israeli author and educator, with an expertise in anti-Semitism, has identified several characteristics, that, **when taken together**, classify hatred of Jews as unique among other instances of xenophobia throughout history. These characteristics include: longevity, universality, permanence, intensity, fantasy, and irrationality

1. **Longevity:** It is the longest hatred in history. Ever since the time of Abraham we can identify the presence of anti-Semitism.
2. **Universality:** It has been experienced everywhere Jews have lived in history, nearly without exception.
3. **Permanent:** Anti-Semitism remains embedded in the collective cultural consciousness of communities and peoples even long after Jews have left or been expelled from their land.
4. **Intensity:** Anti-Semitism has been expressed as ongoing hate, persecution, exile, violence and genocide more than any other hatred in history.
5. **Fantasy:** Hatred against any minority group usually develops out of a misinterpretation of reality. The case of anti-Semitism is different in that there is no such misinterpretation, but sheer fantasy.

6. **Irrationality:** Michael Curtis, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of political science at Rutgers has observed that “everything and its opposite is an excuse to hate the Jews.” This irrationality is unique to anti-Semitism.

*“Everybody has a people they hate; a group you do not like, that are threatening you. But the uniqueness of anti-Semitism lies in the fact that no other people in the world have been charged simultaneously with alienation from society and with cosmopolitanism; with being capitalist exploiters and also revolutionary communists; with having a materialist mentality or being a people of the book. We are accused of being both militant aggressors and cowardly pacifists; adherents to a superstitious religion and agents of modernism. We uphold a rigid law and are also morally decadent. We have a chosen people mentality and an inferior human nature; we are both- arrogant and timid; individualistic and communally adherent; we are guilty of both the crucifixion of Jesus to the Christians, and to others we are held to account for inventing Christianity. Everything and its opposite becomes an excuse for anti-Semitism.”* Michael Curtis, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Political Science, Rutgers University

The uniqueness of anti-Semitism therefore compels us to ask if the cause for the phenomenon is unique. Proposed theories for anti-Semitism are explored in the second Morasha class in this series.

## KEY THEMES OF SECTION VIII

- ∞ Gustavo Perednick, an Argentinean-born Israeli author and educator, with an expertise in anti-Semitism, has identified several characteristics, that, *when taken together*, classify hatred of Jews as unique: longevity, universality, permanence, intensity, fantasy, and irrationality.
- ∞ Historically, Jews have been hated for many stated reasons, many of them self-contradictory.

## CLASS SUMMARY:

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### WHO WERE THE FIRST ANTI-SEMITES?

- Anti-Semitism began in approximately 1763 BCE when King Nimrod sentenced the first Jew, Avraham, to death for ridiculing idol worship and teaching that one God created the world and gave it Divine values. Archetypical Biblical anti-Semites include Yishmael, Esav, Lavan, Pharoah and the Egyptians, Amalek and Bilaam.

### WHY SHOULD OTHER RELIGIONS SUCH AS CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM BEAR A GRUDGE TOWARDS JUDAISM?

- Both Christianity and Islam resent Jews for not accepting their beliefs. Christianity could not forgive the Jews for rejecting Jesus as the messiah, and they placed upon their heads

every evil and libel that can possibly be imagined. To cover up theological difficulties presented by the continued existence of the Jews, Christian doctrine pointed to this as a continual lesson to the world, demonstrating the punishment for those who dare deny the Christian messiah. The rampant persecutions, expulsions, and murders that Jews suffered at the hands of Christians throughout the ages came as a result of their claims. Since Jews denied Islam, the new religion founded by Muhammad, he turned against them, fighting them in battle and cursing them in his writings. Since the founding of the Jewish state, Islam has led the world in its anti-Semitic rhetoric, writings, and attacks.

### **HOW DID ANTI-SEMITISM DURING THE ENLIGHTENMENT DIFFER FROM ITS RELIGIOUS PREDECESSORS?**

- The Enlightenment's hatred of Jews was based on their values and theology, not on their race and biology. Enlightenment writers express their disdain for the Jews for their belief in monotheism and morality, which they saw as a hindrance to the unrestricted freedom they were striving for.

### **HOW IS CONTEMPORARY ANTI-ZIONISM REALLY A MASKED FORM OF ANTI-SEMITISM?**

- Although anti-Zionists vigorously deny being categorized as anti-Semites, their spoken and written words expose a masked hatred of Jews, not just Zionists. As Robert Moss, president of the United Church, commented on the anti-Zionist UN resolution of 1975, "We should not be deceived by the use of the term Zionism. The sponsors of this resolution mean by it Jews and Judaism as well as the state of Israel."

### **WHAT DISTINGUISHES ANTI-SEMITISM FROM ANY OTHER FORM OF RACIAL, RELIGIOUS, OR NATIONAL DISCRIMINATION OR HATRED?**

- Anti-Semitism has several characteristics that when combined show hatred of Jews as unique among forms of xenophobia throughout history. These characteristics include: longevity, universality, permanence, intensity, fantasy, and irrationality. The historical review of anti-Semitism is astounding. We have seen how anti-Semitism was present in the ancient world, in the Christian world, in the Muslim world, and in the Enlightenment period. In the modern period Anti-Semitism remains in its classical forms and in Hitler's new "racist" version. Today it still influences Leftist anti-Zionism. For as long as there are records, there has never been a time in world history free of anti-Semitism.
- The conclusion that emerges from the historical perspective is that anti-Semitism is not just another manifestation of racism and general prejudice against the foreigner. It is much more. It is a hatred of Judaism and all that that entails. To repeat the words of Reverend Edward Flannery, "The Jew carries the burden of God in history [and] for this has never been forgiven."

## **ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED READING & SOURCES**

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The Chosen People: Israel and the Nations by Rabbi Avraham Edelstein, Ner Le'Elef, [nleresources.com/kiruv-and-chinuch/online-books/nle-teaching-books/the-chosen-nation/](http://nleresources.com/kiruv-and-chinuch/online-books/nle-teaching-books/the-chosen-nation/)